

VZCZCXYZ0000
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBJA #5796 2131003
ZNY CCCCC ZZH ZUI RUEWCSE5024 2131017
O 011003Z AUG 06
FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0000
INFO CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIJING 015796

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/01/2016
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [KIRF](#)
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS: ATTORNEY GAO ZHISHENG BEATEN,
ELECTION ACTIVIST YAO LIFA DETAINED

CLASSIFIED BY: POLITICAL INTERNAL UNIT CHIEF SUSAN
THORNTON. REASONS 1.4 (B/D).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: BEIJING-BASED ATTORNEY GAO ZHISHENG, WHO REPRESENTS FALUN GONG, HOUSE CHRISTIANS AND OTHER DISSIDENTS, WAS BEATEN BY JULY 30 AFTER HE COMPLAINED ABOUT LOUD DISTURBANCES BY HIS "UNDERCOVER" SECURITY DETAIL THAT KEPT HE AND HIS FAMILY AWAKE. SEPARATELY, HUBEI ELECTION ACTIVIST YAO LIFA WAS DETAINED AND RELEASED JULY 26 WHILE DISCUSSING INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES FOR LOCAL ELECTIONS WITH OTHER ACTIVISTS. POLOFF RAISED USG CONCERN ABOUT GAO'S BEATING WITH MFA HUMAN RIGHTS DIVISION DEPUTY DIRECTOR LI NAN, WHO WAS UNAWARE OF THE CASE. AT YAOS REQUEST, WE DID NOT RAISE THE ISSUE OF HIS DETENTION. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) AFTER BEING DISTURBED BY LOUD NOISE COMING FROM A CAR PARKED OUTSIDE HIS BEIJING APARTMENT, DISSIDENT ATTORNEY GAO ZHISHENG CALLED POLICE AT ABOUT 10 P.M. ON JULY 30 TO COMPLAIN THAT HE, HIS FAMILY MEMBERS AND NEIGHBORS COULD NOT SLEEP, FELLOW ATTORNEY TENG BIAO TOLD POLOFF. WHEN POLICE ARRIVED, GAO WENT OUTSIDE TO COMPLAIN ABOUT THE NOISE AND THE ONGOING SURVEILLANCE OF HIS MOVEMENTS. IN THE ENSUING SCUFFLE WITH POLICE, GAO'S ARM WAS SEVERELY INJURED, SAID TENG, WHO HAS SEEN GAO SINCE THE BEATING. AFTER THE SCUFFLE, GAO WAS TAKEN TO THE LOCAL POLICE PRECINCT FOR QUESTIONING AND RELEASED BUT WAS NOT HOSPITALIZED. THE WESTERN MEDIA HAS REPORTED THE INCIDENT, BUT WE HAVE NOT SEEN REPORTS IN THE CHINESE PRESS.

¶3. (C) POLOFF RAISED USG CONCERN ABOUT THE REPORTS WITH MFA HUMAN RIGHTS DIVISION DEPUTY DIRECTOR LI NAN, WHO SAID SHE WAS UNAWARE OF THE ISSUE BUT WOULD LOOK INTO IT. THE CONFLICT IS THE LATEST IN AN ONGOING BATTLE BETWEEN GAO AND POLICE SINCE HIS LAW FIRM WAS SHUTTERED LAST YEAR AND HIS LAW LICENSE SUSPENDED AFTER HE ORGANIZED A HUNGER STRIKE AND WROTE SEVERAL OPEN LETTERS PROTESTING CHINA'S ABUSE OF FALUN GONG ADHERENTS AND OTHER DISSIDENTS.

ELECTIONS ACTIVIST DETAINED AND RELEASED

¶4. (C) IN A SEPARATE CASE, ELECTIONS ACTIVIST YAO LIFA WAS DETAINED ON JULY 26 IN HUBEI PROVINCE WHILE EATING A MEAL WITH ELECTION ACTIVISTS FROM HUBEI AND SEVERAL OTHER PROVINCES. THE GROUP WAS MEETING TO PLAN STRATEGIES FOR RUNNING INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES IN UPCOMING LOCAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS ELECTIONS. YAO, WHO CONVENED THE MEETING IN XIANTAO CITY ABOUT 100 KILOMETERS FROM HIS NATIVE QIANJIANG WHERE HE HAS HAD TROUBLE WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES, SAID LOCAL POLICE ARRIVED AT THE RESTAURANT AND DETAINED THE GROUP FOR "UNLAWFUL ASSEMBLY." YAO SAID THE CHARGE WAS SPURIOUS

AND THAT HE TOLD POLICE THEY HAD NO GROUNDS TO BREAK UP A MEAL AMONG FRIENDS.

15. (C) YAO AND SEVERAL OF THOSE DETAINED WERE RELEASED AFTER SEVERAL HOURS OF QUESTIONING, WHILE TWO OTHERS WERE HELD OVERNIGHT AND RELEASED THE NEXT DAY. YAO SAID HE WOULD NOT BE SWAYED BY THE GOVERNMENT'S "INTIMIDATION TACTICS" AND SAID HE WAS ORGANIZING UP TO 100 INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES TO RUN IN BEIJING'S LOCAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS ELECTIONS IN 2007. IN RESPONSE TO OUR OFFER TO RAISE THE CASE WITH CHINESE AUTHORITIES, YAO SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE USG INTERVENTION ON HIS CASE WAS NECESSARY OR DESIRABLE AT THIS POINT, BUT THANKED THE EMBASSY FOR ITS CONCERN.

RANDT